

South St. Paul City Council Work Session

Session Notes for July 28, 2025

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Francis called the City Council Work Session to order at 7:00 PM on July 28, 2025

No formal Council Action is taken at a work session meeting, this is a summary of discussion that took place.

Council Members Present: Jimmy Francis, Lori Hansen, Joe Kaliszewski, Matt Thompson, Pam Bakken, Tom Seaberg, and Todd Podgorski.

Staff Present: Ryan Garcia, City Administrator

2. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Library Repurposing Update

Mr. Garcia provided a brief review of some of the key takeaways from the recently completed Library Repurposing Study. Council discussed the challenges inherent in maintaining an older, vacant building but reaffirmed their consensus to maintain the building and work to position the property for reuse. Council directed staff to:

- Retain funding in the 2026 CIP for core investments in the building, notably the boiler, but did not direct staff to accelerate any Capital Investments in the building at this time.
- Redouble efforts to engage potential locally-based organizations as partners in a re-purposing of the space.
- Identify and explore potential grant or other funding opportunities that may be “unlocked” through partnerships with non-profit entities.
- Amplify the City’s marketing of the property, potentially through a multimedia campaign that is distributed to the broader community to raise awareness and industry.

B. Local Affordable Housing Aid

Mr. Garcia provided an update on the City’s 2024 Local Affordable Housing Aid, which has been fully committed for single-family rehabilitation loans and radon mitigation grants to eligible households in South St. Paul. After discussing potential options for expanded program offerings consistent with the Local Affordable Housing Aid guidance, Council’s consensus was to continue to work with Dakota County Community Development Agency to administer the City’s 2025 Aid Allocation, which the state certified at 313,527.18. Council thought that a de-conversion program might be a program to explore in future years.

C. Streetscape Maintenance Approach Discussion

Council discussed streetscape maintenance along the City's primary commercial corridors, most of which are maintained by CurbSide Landscape and Irrigation in accordance with a Contract through the EDA. Council expressed some concern that Southview Boulevard (as well as some city entrance monuments and park signs) could be hit-or-miss in terms of reliability as these areas are maintained through the City's Community Affairs and Volunteer efforts. Council encouraged continued coordination amongst departments to assure that public planting areas are consistently maintained, and to continue to evaluate the reliability of the current approach to determine if expanding the CurbSide scope, or shifting towards building internal capacity, will be necessary for future seasons.

D. City Administrator's Update

Mr. Garcia shared that the first phase of Wakota Crossing was awarded Contamination Cleanup Grant funding from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development. The total grant award was approximately \$550,000 less than the request. Staff continues to work with the developer's team to refine cleanup costs and identify other potential sources of funding for the cleanup and redevelopment project.

Mr. Garcia shared trend data for Fire/EMS service in the South Metro Fire service area, and provided some financial data relating to both costs and revenues related to EMS service.

Mr. Garcia shared an update from the July meeting of the Dakota County Managers-Administrators meeting, with a highlight on Budget and Levy status in Dakota County Communities.

3. COUNCIL COMMENTS & QUESTIONS

There were none.

4. CLOSED SESSION

- A. Closed Session Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes §13D.05, Subd. 3(c) to develop or consider offers for the sale of real property at 400 Richmond Street East (no attachment)

Councilmember Thompson made a motion to close the meeting at 9:19 PM, Seconded by Councilmember Bakken.

Motion Passed, 7/0

Councilmember Bakken made a motion to reopen the meeting at 9:40 PM, Seconded by Councilmember Thompson.

Motion Passed, 7/0

- B. Closed Session Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes §13D.05, Subd. 3(c) to develop or consider offers for the sale of real property at 450 Armour Avenue (no attachment)

Councilmember Kaliszewski made a motion to close the meeting at 9:41 PM, Seconded by Councilmember Bakken.

Motion Passed, 7/0

Councilmember Seaberg made a motion to reopen the meeting at 9:51 PM, Seconded by Councilmember Podgorski.

Motion Passed, 7/0

5. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the City Council at the regular work session meeting, Mayor Francis declared the meeting adjourned at 9:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
/s/: Ryan Garcia
City Administrator